

Remarks/Arguments

In the March 21, 2005 final office action, claims 1, 2, 4-10, 19, 20 and 22 were rejected under section 103(a) as being unpatentable over McNutt (US Patent No. 1,562,709) in view of Johnson (US Patent No. 3,177,638). Claim 3 was rejected under section 103(a) as being unpatentable over McNutt and Johnson, and further in view of Bednar et al (US Patent No. 6,336,312). Claim 11 was rejected under section 103(a) as being unpatentable over McNutt and Akgulian et al (US Patent No. 3,613,337), and further in view of Sallstrom et al (US Patent No. 5,533,325). Claims 12, 15 and 18 were rejected under section 103(a) as being unpatentable over McNutt, Akgulian et al, and Sallstrom et al, and further in view of Johnson. Claim 13 was rejected under section 103(a) as being unpatentable over McNutt, Akgulian et al, Sallstrom et al, and Johnson, and further in view of Worthington (US Patent No. 1,330,293). Claim 14 was rejected under section 103(a) as being unpatentable over McNutt, Akgulian et al, Sallstrom et al, and Johnson, and further in view of Ronning (US Patent No. 1,957,079). Claim 16 was rejected under section 103(a) as being unpatentable over McNutt, Akgulian et al, and Sallstrom et al, and further in view of Gerzanich (US Patent No. 4,341,059). Claim 17 was rejected under section 103(a) as being unpatentable over McNutt, Akgulian et al, and Sallstrom et al, and further in view of Speiser (US Patent No. 3,410,063),

In response to the final office action, claims 1, 11, 19, 20 and 22 are amended.

Claim 1 is amended to specify a first row of two cutting units mounted to horizontally extending lift arms in front of the pair of front wheels, one of the cutting units in the second row is positioned entirely in the uncovered area between the left rail and the right rail, and two of the cutting units in the second row are mounted to horizontally extending lift arms that pivot to lift the two cutting units to a transport position inside the track width of the pair of rear wheels.

As amended, claim 1 is patentable over McNutt in view of Johnson. McNutt fails to show cutting units mounted to horizontally extending lift arms. Instead, McNutt's cutting units are pulled by forwardly extending draft structure 12. McNutt fails to show one of the cutting units in the second row being positioned entirely in

the uncovered area between the left rail and the right rail. Instead, McNutt's Fig. 1 shows cutting unit 39 beneath channels 25. Johnson fails to show two cutting units in a transport position inside the track width of the pair of rear wheels. Instead, Johnson's Fig. 1 shows cutting units (in broken lines) that extend laterally outside the track width of rear wheels 12. Johnson also fails to show one of the cutting units in the second row being positioned entirely in an uncovered area between a left and right rail. Instead, Johnson only shows two cutting units in the second row on the left and right sides of the chassis.

Claim 2 is patentable over McNutt and Johnson for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Claim 3 is patentable over McNutt, Johnson and Bednar et al for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Additionally, Bednar et al shows a mower configuration having a first row of three cutting units 34 mounted ahead of the front wheels, and a second row of two cutting units 152 that are at least partially covered by the vehicle.

Claims 4-10 are patentable over McNutt and Johnson for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Claim 11 is amended to specify one of the positions raising and rotating two of the cutting units to a full vertical position within the widest track of the wheels.

As amended, claim 11 is patentable over McNutt, Akgulian et al, and Sallstrom et al. Akgulian et al fails to show raising and rotating two of the cutting units to a full vertical position within the widest track of the wheels. Instead, when Akgulian et al's cutting units 29, 30 are raised, they extend outside widest track of the wheels, which are the front wheels 16. Additionally, Sallstrom et al fails to show a power supply mounted to the chassis adjacent the rear end of the chassis and at least primarily behind the operator module and the pair of rear wheels. Instead, Sallstrom et al's engine 6 is over the single rear wheel 10.

Claims 12, 15 and 18 are patentable over McNutt, Akgulian et al, Sallstrom et al, and Johnson for at least the same reasons as claim 11.

Claim 13 is patentable over McNutt, Akgulian et al, Sallstrom et al, Johnson and Worthington for at least the same reasons as claim 11.

Claim 14 is patentable over McNutt, Akgulian et al, Sallstrom et al, Johnson and Ronning for at least the same reasons as claim 11.

Claim 16 is patentable over McNutt, Akgulian et al, Sallstrom et al and

Gerzanich for at least the same reasons as claim 11.

Claim 17 is patentable over McNutt, Akgulian et al, Sallstrom et al and Speiser for at least the same reasons as claim 11.

Claim 19 is amended to specify a first row and a second row of cutting units mounted on arms extending laterally from the chassis, the first row including two cutting units less than 18 inches in front of the front pair of wheels and the second row including three cutting units less than 18 inches behind the front pair of wheels.

As amended, claim 19 is patentable over McNutt and Johnson. McNutt fails to show cutting units mounted on arms extending laterally from the chassis, but shows cutting units that are pulled by forwardly extending draft structure 12. McNutt also fails to show cutting units that are less than 18 inches in front of or behind the front pair of wheels. Instead, McNutt's cutting units are at least several feet in front of the front pair of wheels. Johnson fails to show cutting units within the track width of the rear wheels in a transporting position. Instead, Johnson's Fig. 1 shows cutting units (in broken lines) that extend laterally outside the track of rear wheels 12.

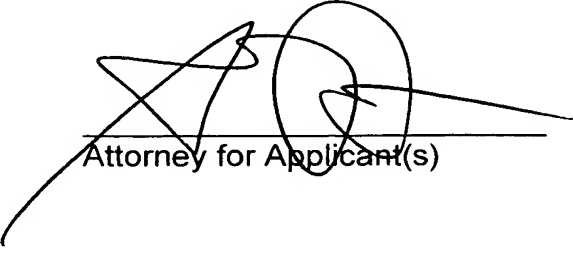
Claim 20 is amended to specify one cutting unit is positioned entirely between a pair of rails. As amended, claim 20 is patentable over McNutt and Johnson. McNutt fails to show a cutting unit positioned entirely between the pair of rails. Instead, McNutt's Fig. 1 shows cutting unit 39 beneath channels 25. Johnson also fails to show one of the cutting units in the second row being positioned entirely between a pair of rails. Instead, Johnson only shows two cutting units in the second row on the left and right sides of the chassis.

Claim 22 is amended to specify the power supply primarily behind the rear wheels to drive the rear wheels. As amended, claim 22 is patentable over McNutt and Johnson. Johnson fails to show a power supply that is primarily behind the rear pair of wheels to drive the rear wheels. Instead, Johnson's Fig. 9 shows motor A1 mounted at the front of the chassis, while Johnson's Fig. 1 shows "auxiliary internal combustion engine 18 which is used solely to drive the mower heads C and D." (Column 3, lines 14-15).

In conclusion, it is believed that this application is in condition for allowance, and such allowance is respectfully requested.

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Respectfully,


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